

Charette Discussion Issues

The purpose of this charette is to resolve land use differences that were brought up by the subcommittees. The charette exercise will provide policy guidance for the Comprehensive Plan Update. Six issues will be available for participants to discuss during the charette. There will be three discussion sessions for individuals to offer their ideas on the three issues of their choice. The topics in this document are not prioritized in any particular order.

This document identifies each issue, provides applicable background, and discussion points. The discussion questions are only meant to stimulate the conversation, and participants will not be restricted to the listed questions. Further background information specific to each topic will be provided at the charette. Each Participant will discuss a different topic in each of the three sessions.

At the end of each of the discussion sessions, the participants will be asked to agree on the two ideas that were the most important to their group. At the end of the meeting, the staff facilitators will summarize the night's discussion for each of the six issues for all the charette participants. Response cards will be provided for the public to write down any questions or comments for the steering committee to consider.

Ideally there will be consensus on each of the discussion issues at the Charette. If consensus is not reached, the consultants will formulate proposals within the draft plan for the steering committee to consider. There will be further opportunities for public comment. .

1. Hamilton Boone Road

The southwest subcommittee had a large amount of participants. In order to adequately facilitate the land use designation exercise, the subcommittee was divided into four groups. These four groups had divergent views about what types of land uses are appropriate along Hamilton-Boone Road south of SR 32. The Indianapolis Executive Airport, which is owned by Hamilton County, is located about a mile from the area in Boone County. The area on the west side of Hamilton-Boone Road is in Boone County, and The Town of Westfield has no control over how these properties develop. Any development along Hamilton-Boone Road should be compatible with the operation of the airport and the policies of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Currently the area has low-density residential uses with some commercial businesses.

Points to Consider:

- a. Jolietville will act as an external pressure on this area.
- c. There is a potential for the land uses along Hamilton-Boone Road south of the SR 32 corridor to develop as very low density residential or lower intensity commercial uses as seen today.
- d. 146th Street will be a five-lane thoroughfare between I69 and I65.

Unresolved Issues from the Southwest Subcommittee:

- a. Some participants wanted commercial and industrial uses locate in the area to act as a buffer from the airport.
- b. Other participants wanted the area to develop with low density, single family residences.
- c. One of the groups thought that the area would be appropriate for agribusiness.

Discussion Questions:

- a. Land uses along Hamilton-Boone Road will be subject to FAA requirements. What other factors should be considered in deciding what land uses are appropriate on Hamilton-Boone Road south of SR 32?
- b. What external pressures would affect the development of Hamilton-Boone Road? (INDOT, Boone County, Hamilton County, infrastructure etc.)
- c. How will abutting and adjacent land uses affect the development along Hamilton-Boone Road?

2. Retail/Office Scale

Retail and office developments can be developed at different scales. Scale defines how large a market a business serves. Locally scaled developments serve a small market. Local businesses can locate in small commercial nodes. Some examples in the Township of locally scaled commercial nodes are downtown and the four named villages. Locally scaled businesses are usually smaller in size and require fewer services. Locally scaled businesses create less negative consequences for adjacent properties. They create small amounts of traffic, light, and unwanted noises. Locally scaled businesses usually serve a niche market and create less tax revenues than bigger businesses.

Regionally scaled retail and office developments serve a wide area and usually are a destination for consumers from a large geographic area. Regional uses located in Washington Township, such as Village Park Plaza, can serve the whole county or even the whole Indianapolis metropolitan region. These developments require larger roads and utility infrastructure. Regionally scaled developments are usually larger in size, and locate along major thoroughfares. Regionally scaled developments can increase the tax base of the jurisdiction but can also cause negative impacts like high traffic volumes, drainage problems, and light and noise pollution.

The design of retail and office developments in Washington Township needs to be flexible in order to accommodate the growing population. Retail and office developments should be able to be adaptively reused by many different types of businesses through time. Retail and office uses of differing scales can act as effective buffers and transitions between higher intensity industrial uses and residential areas.

Points to Consider:

- a. Retail and office uses can be appropriate as a transition.
- c. Retail and office uses often locate along major thoroughfares and in the nodes of the community.
- e. Retail and office uses require appropriate infrastructure.

Unresolved Issues

- a. Members of the different subcommittees had differing views of what scale(s) of retail and office development are appropriate in Washington Township.
- b. Subcommittee participants were unsure what areas were appropriate for each scale(s) of retail and commercial development.

Discussion Questions:

- a. Are there areas in Westfield that are appropriate for additional regionally scaled commercial and office developments? If so, what are those areas?
- b. What are the factors that should be considered in determining the locations for locally scaled commercial and office developments in the Township?

3. Transitions between Divergent Land Uses

There was consensus among the subcommittees that better transitions were needed between the high intensity uses and the abutting and adjacent less intense land uses. The subcommittee participants had differing ideas of the types of transitions that are appropriate in the Township.

Washington Township and Hamilton County are facing rapid development pressure. As development occurs, land uses will change and redevelop over time. The subcommittee members would like more effective transitions to protect residential property values from the negative aspects of this rapid growth.

Points to Consider:

- a. Current regulations offer limited options on how transitions can be achieved. (Setbacks, ponds, berms, landscaping)
- b. Buffering and transitions within a land use category need more flexibility than transitions between different land use categories.
- c. The current land use plan provides limited guidance of how to create effective transitions.

Unresolved Issues:

- a. The subcommittee participants had differing opinions on how to achieve an effective transition.
- b. There were varying opinions between the subcommittees on where transitions are needed.

Discussion Questions:

- a. When are transitions not needed?
- b. What are some acceptable methods of transition that can be used in the Township?
- c. What are some undesirable methods of transition that should not be used in the Township?

4. SR 32 Highway from US 31 to East Street

There is an opportunity to create a unique character on SR 32 from US 31 to East Street. Land uses along this corridor consist of a mix of residential, commercial, recreational, and institutional. There is currently pressure to convert existing single family residences into commercial uses.

Points to Consider:

- a. Parking issues along SR 32 are currently being addressed by a downtown parking study.
- b. The corridor may have significant opportunities to be a gateway.
- c. Development along the corridor will be by redevelopment or conversion.
- d. Cool Creek is a constraint to development along SR 32.
- e. The Midland Trace trail will contribute to the quality of life.
- f. Traditional downtowns often cannot compete with suburban shopping centers.
- g. Successful downtowns usually include entertainment areas.

Unresolved Issues:

There is a lack of direction of what the character of the SR32 corridor will be, and how the corridor will transition to the surrounding areas. The downtown subcommittee stated that there is a lack of investment to keep the corridor competitive with surrounding commercial areas.

Discussion Questions:

- a. What abutting and adjacent uses will impact the development of SR 32?
- b. What external pressures will affect the development of SR 32?
- c. What are the benefits of this corridor being a special study or focus area?
- d. Is it appropriate to convert residential structures to commercial uses? If so, what factors should be considered when these conversions are proposed.

5. SR 38 Corridor

There are unresolved issues between the corridors subcommittee and the two groups in the northeast subcommittee about what land uses should be along the SR 38 corridor. Currently the SR 38 corridor is primarily residential interspersed with few retail commercial establishments. Noblesville's 2003 comprehensive plan shows the SR 38 corridor as residential in nature. The land use and zoning maps for the adjacent jurisdictions of Noblesville, Adams and Jackson Townships and Sheridan will be located at the table for your review.

Points to Consider:

- a. SR 38 is a mixed use corridor.
- b. Land use policies should create seamless transitions along the SR 38 corridor between Washington Township and adjacent jurisdictions.
- c. Uses along the corridor should transition to abutting and adjacent uses.
- d. Commercial development may concentrate around the SR 38 and US 31 interchange.

Unresolved Issues:

- a. Some participants of the northeast subcommittee want the SR 38 corridor be a transition area between the proposed agricultural uses to the south and the low density residential uses to the north of SR 38.
- b. Other participants from the northeast subcommittee recommended that the whole SR 38 corridor be commercial.
- c. The corridors subcommittee recommended that the intersection of US 31 and SR 38 have Big Box commercial and then transition into a residential corridor east towards Noblesville.

Discussion Questions:

- a. Traffic on state and federal highways usually increases over time. Understanding the nature of highways, what points should be considered in determining land uses proximate to the corridors
- b. What external pressures will affect the development along the SR 38 corridor?
- c. What development pressures will occur if infrastructure is extended?

6. The Villages

Washington Township has four unincorporated named villages: Lamong, Eagletown, Jolietville, and Hortonville. The subcommittees in which these villages are located mentioned that each of the four villages would have the opportunity to have its own unique character. The subcommittees recommended that the villages be areas with higher intensity development.

All of the villages currently have platted lots and dedicated streets. The villages are zoned for high intensity residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. Eagletown and Jolietville are located on the Midland Trace trail corridor and Hortonville is on the Monon trail. None of the villages are served by public water or sewer, although Eagletown has a package sewer system. Eagletown is directly in line with the anticipated construction of the 54 inch sewer pipe that will run along the Little Eagle Creek

Points to Consider:

- a. The villages may be areas of higher intensity, mixed use development.
- b. Each of the villages should have their own unique character.
- c. The villages are pedestrian in scale.

Unresolved Issues:

There is a current lack of direction to explain how each of the villages will develop, and how they should transition to the lower intensity development that surrounds them.

Discussion Questions:

- a. What should be the role of each of the four villages?
- b. What characteristics make each of the villages desirable as a destination? What design criteria will enhance these characteristics?
- c. What factors should be considered in the future development and growth of these villages?

